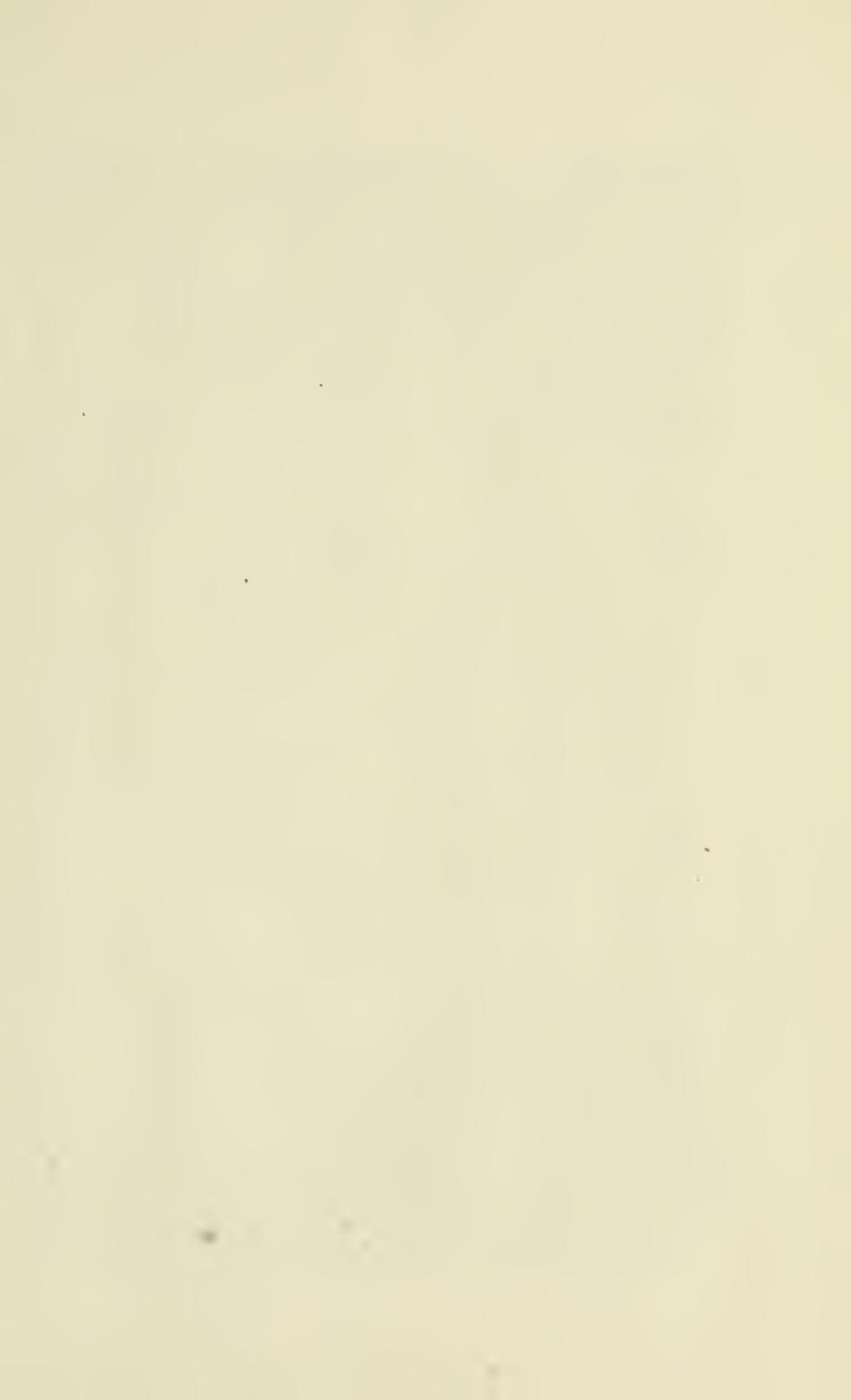


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An Address

TO THE

People

OF

Arkansas

BY

THOMAS BOLES

OF

Fort Smith, Arkansas





THOMAS BOLES, Fort Smith, Arkansas

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An Address to the People of Arkansas

BY
THOMAS BOLES
OF
Fort Smith, Arkansas

Ladies and Gentlemen:—

After your daily toil is over and the family has gathered in the home for that rest known only to those who toil, I want to talk with you an hour or so about matters of great interest to all Arkansans. While these matters concern our public affairs as Arkansans, I assure you before beginning, my remarks shall be solely in the interest of good government. My object being to awaken and arouse the public mind and heart of Arkansans to the best interests of the State and all our people; and, if possible, to stir them up to right action as a free people capable of governing themselves, instead of being governed by some mysterious, self-constituted and irresponsible aggregation of authority, consisting of committees or bosses.

With this assurance on my part may I now proceed? Fearing some may ask, "Who are you that asks to appropriate one whole hour's time of our family?" I reply, "I was born and have lived all my life in Arkansas, being less than one year younger than the State." And farther, by way of introduction, and I hope I do not

lay myself open to the charge of egotism by saying that I have served the Nation in the army and in its Legislative and Executive Departments; and have served our State in a judicial as well as other capacities, and I am not ashamed of the records made of such services. And further, to be free and frank with you I will add, that in politics I am first an American and next I am now and have been since 1867, a republican, of the Lincoln and Blaine School. However, still further to be frank with you, I have on several occasions found that I could not fully indorse the platform of the Republican party and its nominees; and have as an American citizen, fallen back on my inalienable right as such, and voted as my own judgment thought best for the interest of the great majority of the people of the whole country. In doing this I then thought and yet think I was doing right, because I was casting a vote that expressed my own sentiments and not an opinion ready-made for me. Hence, while I was temporarily, under the unpleasant necessity of differing from a majority of republicans, still having voted according to my own best judgment at the time, I have no apologies to make to anyone for my exercise of the right of an American freeman to vote as he honestly believes to be right.

Now, with this elaborate assurance and introduction I will venture to proceed.

The Voters Responsibility

Under a government like ours, State and National, framed upon the basic principle that the people rule, the duty of the citizen is great, indeed much greater than that of a subject under a King or Emperor; but such duty is the price that must always be paid for that greatest boon ever achieved or inherited by man,

liberty, which means the right and duty of individual thought and action. And if this liberty, which we have inherited, is to be preserved, it must be by the people investigating, thinking and intelligently and patriotically acting for themselves, bravely and strictly in accordance with what they believe to be right. Any man who would act otherwise has not attained to the full estate of American Manhood.

Every good citizen should inform himself as best he can of all matters pertaining to public affairs; and then it is his duty to use such information as a basis upon which to found his support of or opposition to any proposed measure or policy. This is legitimate, proper and patriotic politics, because its sole object is the public good. This is not only proper and legitimate politics, it indicates the duty of all good citizens. Unfortunately this is not the only kind of politics we have in Arkansas claiming and receiving public attention and support from too many of our people, who from habit, thoughtlessly follow the lead of selfish men or self serving partisans. In addition to the pure public-spirited politics above mentioned, we have partisan politics, which has for its object the service of some political party, and incidentally the good of the country. Its votaries agree on some great measure or policy which they believe calculated to best promote the general welfare of the people, while they are opposed by other political organizations, which entertains an opposite opinion. Then we have personal politics, which has for its sole object the promotion of the interest and ambition of some person or combination of persons, who claim to be members of some political party in order to use it for their personal interest; and such persons are generally in the party which locally has a majority. This is the worst species of politics, because it is base and sordid and too often is as unscrupulous

as it is selfish; resorting to all kinds of subterfuges to misrepresent and slander and defame their opponents, and at the same time hypocritically pretending to be moved by a public spirit, which never seriously enters their minds. Such politicians bring politics into disrepute with many good people and disgrace to the party to which they belong. Many good people become so disgusted with primaries, conventions and elections that they refuse to participate in them. Indeed in some localities this kind of politics has become so prevalent, pernicious and so prevailing that many good people have refrained for years from taking any part in any public affairs because they hesitate to have contests with self-serving, unscrupulous and slandering candidates for public favors. This is not right, they should boldly and manfully take part in all conventions and primary elections of their respective parties; and insist upon adoption of correct principles and policies in their platforms, and the selection of only worthy and competent men for nominees for all official positions, and give them to understand that unless sound principles are set forth in their platform and worthy men are nominated they will not support the ticket. The personal politician seldom if ever takes into account the public good except to loudly and vehemently profess fealty to it while he is seeking a nomination and an election. Whatever stands in the way of his personal ambition, whether it be party interest or public good is ruthlessly brushed aside, while his campaign cry is "All is fair in politics." He cares not if his party is disgraced by his methods, so he is successful in attaining for himself a public position and sometimes, public plunder. When partisan politics has the ascendancy it often happens that the great masses of the people are made to suffer in order to promote the interest of "the party;" and this may

sometimes be excused by those supporting the winning party upon the honest belief that if the other party should succeed, the people's suffering would be greater. But when personal politics hold sway "the wicked rule and the people mourn" indeed.

The discussion of the merits and demerits (principally the demerits) of self-serving seekers after offices is forced upon the people to the exclusion of all measures of vital importance to all the people; and finally when the people of the State are called upon to make a selection for any particular official position they are driven to make a choice between two evils; and of course, they choose the one they think the lesser evil; or refuse to vote at all. Thus virtually disfranchising themselves. The campaign generally consists in each candidate discussing his own fitness and the utter unfitness of his opponent for the position to which they aspire; and often ample proof of the unfitness of both is produced with convicting force.

Reform and Industrial School

Year after year scores of young boys, some of them in knee pants, have been sent to the State Penitentiary and imprisoned with hundreds of hardened criminals, with whom they are compelled to associate at that tender age, when they are so susceptible to evil as well as good influences. Generally, they are without father and, in many cases, without a mother's care and love. Most of them are mere children, left without home or any of the restraining or refining influences that should be found in every home; and are victims of a vicious and depraved environment suffered to exist by law, if not encouraged by a failure of the enforcement of the laws made for the suppression of crime and the protection of society. Notwithstanding

the State has suffered these children to be led into temptation, as soon as they fall, or even stumble, they are seized by the State authorities and punished without mercy, and with no thought of their reformation. Indeed the State puts them where no reforming influences can reach them, and where only evil influences have sway. At that tender age they readily imbibe the teachings of the vicious men with whom they are compelled to associate. Thus it is, that the State, instead of trying to save these poor and unfortunate children from a life of crime, is really bringing in from all over the State scores of pupils and putting them under the tutelage of hardened and experienced criminals, making the Penitentiary a school of crime for graduating criminals. Hence, when the young boy comes out of the Penitentiary, he is an accomplished criminal, made such by the State; and, of course, is ready and well prepared to take up and live a life of crime, and the exception is rare where he does not do it. Since like produces like, and since the State has acted as a criminal in its treatment of these boys, we have no right to expect from such ex-convicts, anything else than a life of crime.

Look at it from whatever point of view we may, this treatment of juvenile offenders does not pay. Besides it is cruel brutal and inhuman, and in every way revolting to our sense of right and justice. It does not pay the State to make criminals of boys who, with proper humane and reformatory treatment, would become useful citizens and a strength to the State instead of an encumbrance, as most boys are who graduate at the Penitentiary, the State's school of crime.

The good people of this state, individually and collectively, and the newspapers have been for years, demanding that this most shameful and grievous evil be corrected, and they have pointed out to legislature af-

ter legislature how it should be corrected, that is, by providing a Reform and Industrial School for juvenile offenders; where they could be kept separate from vicious criminals. But no such institution has been provided. Later on in this paper I will state what I believe is the reason for this neglect of duty, and suggest a remedy.

State Board of Equalization of Assessments

Our Constitution provides that all taxes shall be equal and uniform throughout the State. This provision of our fundamental law is eminently just and proper, but stands as a dead letter in our books, because it is violated with impunity, and immunity from punishment all over the State. It is true we have County Boards of Equalization of Assessments, which to some extent, equalize assessments among the tax-payers of the different counties; but at present we have no means of compelling an equalization of assessments among all the Counties of the State. The result is that we find assessments in some Counties made at the rate of fifty per cent or more of the true value of the property, while in other Counties they assess on a basis of $33\frac{1}{3}$, 25, 20, and some less than 15 per cent of the true value of the property assessed. Hence, some of our people are paying one hundred per cent more taxes to the State than others. This, I need not say is unjust, but it is in violation of the plain provision of the Constitution, and should be corrected. I know of no better way to correct it than by securing the enforcement of the law which provides that all property subject to taxation, shall be taxed according to its value. This will work no hardship upon any one; nor will it increase the amount of taxes we have to

pay; for we have so much money to raise to meet the expenses of administering the government. If all the property of the State were assessed at its true value, our rates of taxation would not be one half as high as they are now, and equal and uniform taxation would be secured.

Whether this policy is to be adopted and enforced, or the old plan of assessing a certain per cent of the value is still to be pursued, we should have a State Board of Equalization to pass upon the assessments made in the different Counties; in order that we may secure equal and uniform taxation throughout the State. Such Board might be appointed by the Governor or by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; but its members should reside in different parts of the State.

I believe that three hundred dollars of the personal property of every head of a family should be exempt from taxation.

Traveling Auditor and Bank Examiner.

The most important interests of the people depend upon the competency, integrity and faithfulness of their County officials. Not only is this the case with reference to the money accounts of their officials, but has reference to the records of titles to real estate, and the descent of property through Chancery and Probate Courts.

It is said that within a generation a large majority of the property in the state passes through the Probate Court alone. Hence, the great and vital importance that all records should be properly made and that all files properly kept so that they may be preserved for all time. The records and files of the other County officials are equally important; and should be made and kept with equal care.

A great many of our County officials, while honest and faithful to the great trusts they have assumed, are not expert accountants, and are not experienced in arranging their offices, or in making records and keeping files in a methodical manner. The greater number of them, with a little assistance of the right kind at the proper time, would become not only honest and faithful, but efficient officials; and by their faithful and efficient service in their respective offices, would save the County and its people of troubles without end which often entail losses amounting to thousands of dollars. Hence, there ought to be a uniform system adopted throughout the State, for arranging all offices of County officers, making of records, and keeping and preserving files; so that they may be as readily referred to and examined by a stranger, who understands the system, as by the officer who has them in charge.

In view of the great interests involved, I believe we should have a Traveling Auditor and Bank Examiner, who should be a skilled accountant, whose duty should be to visit and inspect the books of all County officials and Banks chartered under the laws of the State, and files of all County officials throughout the State at least once a year. His duties being fully defined by law; and requiring him to report at least once a year to the Governor, and as much oftener as the exigencies of cases that may arise may require, to secure good service at the hands of all County officials and Banking institutions operating under the laws of the State.

And it would be well to require such Traveling Auditor and Bank Examiner to examine the assessment books of each County, and report the result of his examinations to the State Board of Equalization, for its consideration in the discharge of their duties.

The work required might, for two or four years,

be greater than one such officer could do; if so, the work is so important and the interest so great that two such officers might be with profit to the public service, used at least until the uniform system of keeping County offices throughout the State is put in good running order.

Collection of Taxes by Districts

Taxes should be collected in the following manner: Divide the state into four equal districts, taking into consideration the amount of taxes to be collected; then collect one district for each three months of the year. That is, collect all the taxes levied in District No. 1, during the months of January, February and March, and pay them into the Treasury by first of April; then collect all taxes levied in District No. 2, during the months of April, May and June, and pay them into the Treasury by first of July; and so on through the districts and through the year. Each of these quarterly payments of taxes into the State Treasury would furnish the ready money to meet the quarterly payments to be made by the State.

Under this plan the tax money would be left with the people until just before it is needed to meet the expenses of the State; thus keeping the money of the state circulating in business among the people until actually needed, instead of having locked up in the State Treasury seven or eight hundred thousand dollars of the people's money as so much dead capital, as is now the case under the present law.

I have advocated this change in the law for many years; and have urged members of the last two or three legislatures to take the matter up and bring it before the legislature. In every instance my proposi-

tion has been received with favor, and attention promised, but none ever given, except Gov. Clarke, in his message to the legislature, at the close of his term recommended that some such measure be enacted.

The question of what should be done with this large sum of the people's money while it is lying idle, awaiting to be paid out on fixed charges against the state, is often agitated. It is certainly well calculated to tempt the cupidity of scheming speculators, to devise ways and means to get hold of and use it until it is needed in paying bills against the state. They, with good reason, say, it is a pity to have these hundreds of thousands of dollars lying idle in the vaults of the state Treasury, while it is so badly needed to increase our circulating medium in the channels of the business of the people. Hence, it was suggested during the last Legislature that the Banks be permitted to take and use it.

But it certainly would be better to let the money stay with the people until the State needs it; then collect it, pay it into the State Treasury just in time for the State to pay it out to its officials and employes. By this means the tax-money paid would not be drawn from circulation more than three or four months; and but comparatively a small amount would be so withdrawn at a time. This would greatly relieve the burden of the responsibility of the Auditor and Treasurer, and reduce the amounts of their bonds to one-third, if not one-fourth their present size.

Such a measure would be worth thousands of dollars annually to the tax-payers of the State; and, of course, should be enacted into law as soon as possible.

Board of Pardons

There should be a Board of Pardons consisting of three members, to be appointed by the Governor by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. They should reside in different parts of the State; and one should be a lawyer of large experience, one a physician who has had a large practice and the other should be a farmer, intelligent and well endowed with common sense and a general knowledge of men and affairs.

This Board should meet once a month at the Capitol Building to consider and pass upon petitions for pardons, which should be filed with the Governor; and a fee of ten dollars or more should accompany each petition for a pardon. The fee should be made large enough to make the Board self-sustaining.

The Franchise

The right to have a voice in public affairs is absolutely necessary if we are to have a government by the people, founded upon the consent of the governed; and there is no way by which this voice can be exercised by the great mass of the people except by attending all elections and casting a vote for such measures and such men as they may each individually, think will best promote the best interest of all.

The right to vote and sit upon juries are absolutely necessary to secure the rights of freemen. Without these rights, no man is a freeman. No man is justly governed without his consent. Without the right to vote there is no way provided by law by which he can give his consent.

Our ancestors struggled for hundreds of years, against tyrannical rulers, who usurped the power to rule the people, before they secured for themselves

and for us the right to vote and sit upon juries. These rights have always been and are now absolutely necessary to secure the priceless boon of liberty. Those rights cost our ancestors, hundreds of thousands of lives and oceans of patriotic blood. But thanks be to our noble, brave and patriotic ancestors, they finally conquered tyranny to the extent of securing these rights which opened the way for human liberty and self-government. From them, without any effort or any sacrifice by us, we have inherited these rights, which secure to us the blessings of liberty if we do our duty.

While the blessings of liberty have been inherited by us from our fathers, without any sacrifices on our part, it does not follow that we are always to enjoy them without an effort. Mr. Jefferson gave us the keynote to patriotism when he said: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." The enemies that Mr. Jefferson warned us to guard against, were not simply the armed and hostile foreign foe. There are many other enemies that are much more dangerous to our liberties. One of the most dangerous enemies we have to fear, is the idea that is growing in this Country, that our officials, who really are only our temporary servants, assume to become, for the time being, our rulers. In the American Union there are no rulers, There is, under God, but one *Ruler*; and that is *The Law*; which is the *will* of the people legally expressed.

There is no way by which the people can legally express their will except by the ballot at elections and in the jury-boxes. Therefore every good citizen will, under our law as it now stands and is administered, do everything in his power to arm himself with the ballot and fit and qualify himself to intelligently use it; and then, without prejudice or passion but with cool and

calm judgment use his ballot courageously by casting it for such men and measures as he, individually, may believe best calculated to secure just and good government for all the people of the State, black as well as white.

Under the laws of our State, before anyone can vote he must have paid his poll tax of one dollar. Many claim this is an unconstitutional burden laid upon the voter; but be that as it may, it is a very light one; and the money derived therefrom goes to the education of the children of the State; and who is there that is worthy to cast a ballot at our elections, who would not willingly contribute one dollar to that greatest of causes; the cause of Education?

The man who fails to get his poll-tax receipt, I fear does not fully appreciate the liberty that has been achieved for him; and he certainly has not attained to a full realization of what constitutes American Manhood. Hence, I insist that every man in the State, black as well as white, *lose no time* in calling upon the collector of taxes in their respective counties and paying their taxes, and getting a separate receipt for their poll-tax. If their names are not on the tax-books, have them put on at once, and *pay the poll-tax*, although a little additional expense may have to be paid, by reason of the names not being on the books. Every good citizen owes it to himself, to his family, to his friends and his State to attend to this *most important* matter without any delay whatsoever. Not only should each man attend to this himself but he ought to arouse his neighbors to do likewise; and *do it at once*. The man who neglects doing his duty in these respects raises the suspicion that he does not properly appreciate American citizenship.

The plea that it is no use to vote, because your vote will not be counted as cast, is not good, for you

are guilty of an omission to do your duty if you do not vote. Let each do his duty before charging wrong doing to others.

Rule of the Majority,

For years the good people through the State have been demanding that the Legislature provide a Reform and Industrial School for juvenile offenders, and for ample accommodation for our unfortunate people who are bereft temporarily or permanently of mind and reason. It is stated that there are now, and have been for years between 300 and 400 of these people for whom there is no room in the Asylum for the Insane and that they are either chained or confined in jails many of which are a disgrace to the State, not being fit for convicted criminals, much less for good people as most of these insane people are. Notwithstanding these demands and appeals made by the people privately and by them in organized bodies, and by their newspapers throughout the State, year after year, to legislature after legislature; and notwithstanding all candidates for seats in the legislature have from year to year, while pleading for votes, have solemnly and publicly pledged themselves to secure the enactment of laws that would meet these pressing public wants and demands; and while thus pledging themselves many of them grow eloquent in speaking of poor little orphan boys in knee pants, who have been tempted by an environment the State has provided or suffered and have fallen victims to such temptations; have been seized by the strong, mailed hand of the law, and ruthlessly rushed through a dirty and filthy jail; then trembling with fear are brought before a Court where justice is expected to be impartially administered; and when a poor unfortunate child has not a friend, the forms of a trial rapidly gone through with, of

course, the proof is positive, conviction is certain and a sentence to the Penitentiary must follow. That means that the poor unfortunate and friendless little culprit is sent to the State's School for graduating accomplished criminals. It means the banishing into outer darkness forever, another young victim of the vicious environment provided for or suffered by the State. And the only way those guilty of such a state of affairs have for quieting the prickings of the little conscience they have left, is to say, as was said by Cain after he had murdered his brother: "I am not my brother's keeper." Cain's plea was not sustained then nor is such a plea good now. Still after all this is discussed so elaborately and with so much righteous earnestness by the candidate, after he becomes a "sitting" member of the legislature, about the only thing that he does towards fulfilling his pledges in this matter is to get somebody to draught a bill on the subject, which he introduces, and, at the expense of the people, sends some newspapers home announcing the fact.

Unfortunately for this measure, just about this time some lobbyist appears upon the scene with some scheme never heard of before by the great body of the legislature, something like the "Smith Bill," or the Hudson Bank Bonds, or something else which had never been discussed or heard of by the people. These schemes, by reason of the persistent push of the lobbyist, becomes the burning issue in the legislature, and the members, whom the people had sent there as their agents to enact laws for the relief of our unfortunate people, forget what they were sent there to do, and spend a great part of their time in debating whether or not they shall relieve somebody else, who is ably and persistently represented by expert lobbyists and attorneys. Thus it is that the time of the legislature is frittered away considering matters

never mentioned by the people when the members were elected, and the work they were sent there to do and which they pledged themselves to do, is neglected and not done. And so far as any new legislation for the benefit of the people of the State is concerned, the legislature need never have met. And this has been so from session to session; and yet will continue from session to session unless a remedy is found.

Now what is the remedy? Some have thought a change in the membership of the Legislature would give the remedy. That has been tried and failed. If it is to be found it must be in some other way. I believe I can point out the way, by which the legislature can be compelled to do whatever the majority of the people demand shall be done. And this can be secured by the people, the source of all political power, retaining to themselves the right to begin all legislation they want, and reserve to themselves the right to pass upon all new legislation that may be initiated by the legislature. This can and should be done by the

REFERENDUM AND INITIATIVE.

The Referendum and Initiative, can be secured to the people of the State by simply changing the rules for enacting laws by the legislature so, that before any bill providing for a new and general law, shall become a law it shall be submitted to a vote of the people. This can be done by providing in the rules of the Senate and House, that upon demand of a certain number of members of either House, after a bill providing for a new law has passed both houses, that it shall be submitted to a vote of the people before it shall be sent to the Governor for approval, and providing, that in case a majority of the people voting at the election vote for it, the Governor shall approve it, and if a majority voting shall vote against it the Governor shall veto it or not sign the bill.

This will, in a great measure, do away with the professional lobbyist and many of their nefarious schemes that are so inimical to the interest of the people; because when they know their schemes must be subjected to a discussion by the people through their newspapers, they will hesitate about hanging around the legislature as they now do, to the obstruction of the business the people want transacted.

Then let the rules of the Legislature be so amended, as to provide that it shall be its duty, within so many days, to be named, after its reception, to vote upon, without amendment, any bill that may be presented to it by petition for its passage signed by one-fifth of the voters of the State; and if the Legislature should fail to pass such bill it shall be, without amendment, submitted to a vote of the people. And in case such bill shall receive a majority of the votes cast at such election such bill shall become a law, the vote of the Legislature to the contrary notwithstanding. Of course the votes above mentioned should be taken at the next general election after the action of the Legislature. This latter proceeding is called *The Initiative*, because the people initiate the proceedings by which the law is secured.

By the *Referendum* the people can at the ballot box protect themselves and the State against vicious, job-snap legislation; and by the *Initiative* they can compel the enactment of such laws as will promote their interest and the general welfare of the State. They will secure the rule of the majority of the people; and will in a great measure do away with personal politics and private schemes that are now and have been for years the bane of public affairs in Arkansas.

I beg of you to consider these suggestions carefully, so that you may fully understand them yourself. I pray you do not ask an old professional lobbist or

politician his opinion of them and then be governed by what he says, for in most instances, their personal interest lies in the old ruts which they have made, and in which they have worked so profitably for themselves these many years. Some may tell you that the suggestions are all right, but will claim they are impracticable; that they can not be carried out. Those who raise this objection, if they are well informed will know better, because they know that the Referendum and Initiative are now and have been for years in satisfactory operation in several states and a great many cities in the American Union; and wherever they have been adopted they have never been abandoned. Whenever any office holder or aspirant for office objects to the Referendum and Initiative, search him closely and you will in nine cases out of ten find that he is in the "old rut" or expects to get in soon. The "old rut" is to get the authority of the people by an election, and then do as he pleases or not do at all. By the Referendum and Initiative the people hold the reins and the whip; and reserve to themselves to choose the road that shall be taken. It is the only way by which we can secure *Rule by a Majority of the People.*

The above is only a few suggestions. The subject is of vital importance to good government. I would like to say more but space forbids.

I will say farther that the above suggestions apply to the government of your towns; and if you endorse them you should exact a written pledge from the candidate before you vote for him that he will favor, work for and stand by the Referendum and Initiative, in State and municipal legislation. Of course you understand there is no partisan politics in these measures; because they are simply measures to secure good government for all the people of the State; and are measures in which all good citizens are equally interested,

be he democrat, republican or populist; white or black.

Then I would urge that each man white and black, in the State of Arkansas, as he values manhood and good government, fully arm himself with the right to vote by paying his poll tax of one dollar which goes to the education of our children; and then make himself heard in all primaries and all elections by demanding the adoption of resolutions and written pledges from candidates favoring the Referendum and Initiative, for securing to the people in fact, what is now only a theory—the *Rule by the Majority of the People*. The only way whereby we can secure for ourselves in fact “a government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

When these are secured we will in short order, get a Reform and Industrial School; ample accommodation for our insane, as well as other greatly needed but neglected legislation.

The closer the people keep to those whom they choose to represent them in any official or representative capacity, the better service will they get from them. And by this means we can eliminate from our body politic the bribed and bribing boodler, and the grasping grafters, in our cities, counties and State. Give such characters to understand that their schemes and measures, must be submitted to the scrutinizing investigation of the people, and at once their occupation will be gone. The Referendum has already been to some extent used in our State with good results, and to the entire satisfaction of the people where used. The ratification of Amendments to the Constitution is always secured by referring to the people; the voting of local school taxes, the establishment of district fences, the establishment of local improvement districts in cities and towns, and the local option law with reference to the sale of liquors, all are in the nature of

the Referendum and all of them are in successful and satisfactory use by the people throughout the State, And I believe the people should reserve to themselves the right to approve or disapprove all new legislation that is proposed by their legislators. By this means the people will govern their representatives and themselves, while now the representatives govern them.

Especially To Republicans.

Every citizen owes it to his State to work and vote for her best interest; or, more properly speaking, for the best interest of all the people of the State. The plea for inaction or lack of attention in public affairs, that one belongs to a party that is hopelessly in the minority is not good. Without patriotic effort a party, although based upon sound principles will always remain in the minority; for it is the earnest and aggressive advocates of truth and right, who are finally successful. Faith in principles and the manhood to contend for them on all proper occasions, always demands and generally receives at least respect at the hands of all good people, and sometimes even of political opponents who are patriotic in their contentions.

These general remarks are especially true and applicable to all Republicans in Arkansas; and under present conditions in our State they appeal with peculiar power and overwhelming force to our sense of duty. The Democratic party in our State, which has been in power here since 1874, is in such a demoralized and chaotic condition that those of its members who may honestly wish to secure good government for the people seem wholly powerless to accomplish anything. At its best, its statesmanship in Arkansas for years has been only tolerable. In that party good men are arrayed against good men, and each side is reinforced by

self serving partisans, seeking to serve their selfish interests and personal ambition; and the fight between them has become so bitter, that they have lost sight of the honor of the State and the interest of the people, the worst species of personal politics prevailing. With such a state of affairs in the dominant party confronting us, we may naturally ask, "What is the duty of the Republicans of Arkansas?" This is a question that should address itself to every individual Republican in the State. And whether we put this question to ourselves or not, and whether we answer it or not, thousands of good people of the State, who are non-partisans ask and answer the question for us. These thousands of people want good, honest and respectable government, and they are not going to support any party that from any cause, has lost its power or disposition to give an honest and creditable administration of public affairs, especially if any other party can assure them of an improvement upon the state of affairs we have had for some years. Hence, it would seem plain that the patriotic duty of the Republicans of Arkansas is, *first to have nothing whatever to do with the democratic primaries and conventions, and, second, to all get together and offer to the good people of the State for their support a full ticket for all State and County offices, composed of the very best men in the State.*

Such men can be found by the thousands among the Republicans of Arkansas. Although a great many of these may be averse to entering the political arena; some for one reason and some for another. Of course, it would be a great sacrifice of business interests, and an immense amount of labor for them to answer the calls of their party and the people of the State to drop business and enter heartily and aggressively into a State campaign. But in what manner can a public-spirited man and patriotic citizen, show his love of

country better than by responding to its call to serve it? I know it takes about as much courage and self-sacrifice to do this as to go to war and face the enemy on the smoking battle field. But if they, with high resolve, step to the front when called, the honor due them is no less than that accorded the soldier who gallantly bears aloft his Country's flag in the day and hour of her danger. The bloodless victories gained for good government at the polls are no less renowned than those gained on the bloody battlefield. Indeed, the victories of our gallant soldiers soon come to naught if the fruits thereof are not guarded with zealous vigilance in civil life.

Oh! but some one says that the Republicans are so divided and split up into factions in this State that it is impossible for them to ever get together and agree upon and support one common ticket. I do not believe it. I have seen much worse divisions among Republicans in this State, when faction fought faction more bitterly than any fight we have had among Republicans in this State during the last few years, and they, at last, waived their differences and came together like fellow patriots in the cause of good and honest government, and went to the polls side by side in support of a common cause and a common ticket. To do this they laid aside all personal matters, condoned what, for the time being, they considered a personal wrong they honestly felt they had suffered, and like patriots, which all Republicans in Arkansas are, rallied to the support of one common cause, the good of the whole country.

I take it Republicans in Arkansas are now as patriotic as they ever were, and as sensible as those of the seventies and eighties. That they can now do as their older com-patriots have done before them, waive their temporary differences in matters of National ad-

ministration, (they have no differences over State affairs) and one and all, black as well as white, resolve to do their duty in the next campaign. Let us admit that some good, true, active and patriotic Republicans have not had the consideration that they and their friends thought and may still think they were entitled to at the hands of the National Administration. That is past. If an injustice has been done any good Republican, that should not be allowed to cripple the Republican party in the State so that it can not discharge the duty that Republicans owe not only to the State and her people, but to themselves. And there certainly never was a time, nor was there ever a State that needed the doctrines of true Republicanism promulgated and put in practice more than is now needed in Arkansas. That work is confided to each and every individual Republican of the State, and should be met manfully and courageously. If we do this we will only discharge a duty we owe as good citizens; and if we do not do it, we will receive, and what is worse, merit the contempt of all good citizens.

Our influence and interest in National politics are infinitesimal when compared with the interest we have in good and honorable government in our own State at home; and certainly if our influence is not exerted and made felt at home we ought not to expect to be heard in National affairs.

Therefore I appeal to you, my fellow Republicans of Arkansas, to lay aside your differences, get together as country-loving American citizens, and true Arkansans, put a full State ticket in the field composed of men, who, if elected, will reflect credit upon those who elect them and upon our much abused State; of men who will give their time, their talent and energy to the advocacy of true Republicanism upon every stump in the State from the time they are nominated

until the last ballot is cast and counted at the State election next September. Let us do our duty, our whole duty and nothing but our duty in this most important crisis in the history of Arkansas; and leave the result to an over-ruling Providence, Who doth all things well; as patriots we cannot afford to do less. And, if, in the dispensation of Divine Providence, our ticket should be the choice of the good people of Arkansas, let us be sure it is composed of men, whose integrity, ability and fitness will enable them to meet the just expectations of those who elect them, and who may agreeably surprise many of those who may oppose them.

With such a ticket placed upon the platform of principles outlined above, together with other matters of importance that may be added, I feel quite sure that whether we succeed at the polls or not, we will do the next best thing, that is, we will demonstrate to the world that we merit success. And if we do not make the effort above outlined we will fall far short of our duty, and this I am not prepared to believe any Republican of Arkansas would suffer to be laid at his door. Let personal matters and personal grievances be laid aside, and let us all rally to the rescue of our State from *personal politics* which is now making it the butt of ridicule all over the country.

This reconciliation of Republicans can be readily and honorably effected by the different State Committees meeting in a spirit of manly fairness, making concessions and waiving of differences and then agree upon a certain time and place for the State Convention; and then address their various county organizations urging them to meet in one County Convention and send to the State Convention one set of delegates composed of their very best men. Let this course be taken and I believe many will be surprised at how easily and how

readily all factional differences among the Republicans of Arkansas will disappear, and how soon our ranks will be closed and in working order like we were twenty and thirty years ago.

If we get together and raise high our party flag in the fore front of our State politics, we will at once become a potent factor in securing just, good and stable government, honorable at home and creditable abroad. And we will take part in securing the best methods for the more rapid development and building up of our State; a State which is more abundantly blessed by nature than any other in the American Union; and only need wise and patriotic statesmanship to make it a happy hive of prosperous industry, including the farm, the factory, the forest, the mines and commerce.

If what I have said should awaken a desire on the part of any considerable number of my fellow-citizens to hear from me further on any of the questions bearing upon the interests of Arkansas, I shall esteem it an honor, as it would be to me a pleasure, to address them at convenient times and places.

“LET US HAVE PEACE.”

Let us remember and act upon that noble and patriotic announcement of that silent man of iron who led us in war and in peace, General Grant, when he uttered those words that have rung in our ears and the ears of the whole country, since the close of our unfortunate Civil War, and will go resounding down the corridors of the coming centuries, when he said: “Let us have peace.” I beg to say the same to each Republican in Arkansas. Remember “Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.”

THOMAS BOLES.

Fort Smith, Arkansas,
March 15, 1904.



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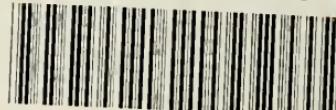
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